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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 002374

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER
LONDON FOR CGURNEY
NAIROBI FOR PFLAUMER
PARIS FOR NEARY
ECA/PE/V/G/A FOR BREED

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ECON](#) [ELAB](#) [PHUM](#) [KPAO](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: ZCTU SECY-GNL'S THOUGHTS IN ADVANCE OF IVP VISIT
TO US

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED. NOT FOR INTERNET POSTING.

[11.](#) (SBU) Summary. Laboff met with Mr. Wellington Chibebe,
Secretary General of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions

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(ZCTU), to review any last-minute questions about his
upcoming IVP travel to the United States. Mr. Chibebe is
prepared and excited, and looks forward to the opportunity to
exchange views with people interested in Zimbabwe. However,
Mr. Chibebe articulated concerns about ZANU-PF's continuing
manipulation of food and other political machinations, and he
expressed fears about potential developments in Zimbabwe
during his absence. End summary.

[12.](#) (SBU) Chibebe stated that Minister of Labour July Moyo
(and thus the ZANU-PF government as well) was aware of his
upcoming travel, and attempted to bait him during a recent
meeting about his lengthy absence. Despite attempts by
Minister Moyo to disconcert him by alluding to US
sponsorship, however, Chibebe simply acknowledged that he was
traveling and changed the subject. Chibebe stated that after
a recent trip to the UK -- during which he was received by
Prime Minister Tony Blair -- the GOZ attempted to diminish
his standing by fresh leveling of accusations that Chibebe is
a puppet of the Western imperialists and that the ZCTU has
degenerated into a political organization. While Chibebe was
resigned to the fact that the GOZ will probably attempt to
mis-characterize his current IVP trip along the same lines,
he is taking a measure of comfort from the protection
afforded by increased international recognition.

[13.](#) (SBU) Chibebe shared his concerns that ZANU-PF continues
to manipulate the distribution of food to deadly effect. He
is aware that food entering the country is a mere fraction of
that necessary to halt impending famine, and believes that
openly MDC regions are suffering disproportionately. He is
concerned that even in cases where lists of beneficiaries are
drawn up in an apparently "transparent" manner, those lists
are still under the control of headmen, chiefs and local
authorities who are predominantly aligned with ZANU-PF.
(Comment: In fact, food distribution lists are drawn up at
meetings of the entire community rather than headmen. End
comment.) Chibebe also reported that when his sister-in-law
contested a seat as an MDC candidate during the recent rural
district elections, she was subsequently refused relief food
which was being distributed by Care International. ZANU-PF
campaigners publicly denounced her and stated that neither
her affiliation with the MDC nor her relationship to Chibebe
and the ZCTU would do her any good. Both during and after
her unsuccessful campaign, she was castigated by ZANU-PF at
rallies and was prevented from buying food from the Grain
Marketing Board. Chibebe reported that his sister-in-law had
to travel to the regional Care office at Masvingo and
register a complaint about her exclusion in order to obtain
any food after ZANU-PF targeted her.

MISINFORMATION ABOUT US FOOD AID

[14.](#) (SBU) Chibebe also reported that ZANU-PF publicly claims
that all food that is entering Zimbabwe is a benefit
exclusively intended for its own supporters. He claimed that
even in instances where food is clearly marked as donations
from USAID or British relief organizations, ZANU-PF leaders
are claiming to villagers that the GOZ has coerced both the
US and the UK to offer the food as reparations for their
crimes against Zimbabwe. As improbable as such claims may
be, there appears to be no effective counter to this
strategy. As evidence of the effectiveness of the political
use of food, or promises thereof, he pointed to the recent
ZANU-PF success in the Insiza elections. Even with the
heavy-handed campaign tactics -- pungwes, militia deployment,
threats and violence -- in both the 2000 elections and the
presidential election, Insiza had not voted for ZANU-PF.
However, facing starvation, and with ZANU-PF promising that

food would only materialize through its patronage, Insiza finally succumbed and elected a ZANU-PF MP.

CONFLICT DIAMOND ACCUSATIONS AGAINST PARLIAMENTARY SPEAKER

15. (SBU) Speaking about recent UN revelations that Emmerson Mnangagwa -- the parliamentary speaker and most likely ZANU-PF successor to Mugabe -- had been implicated in money-laundering and plunder in relation to Democratic Republic of Congo resources, Chibebe believed that this was highly unlikely to have any effect on Mnangagwa's potential succession, should Mugabe eventually choose to bow out. After all, he said, Mugabe himself had been directly implicated in far worse crimes -- including the slaughter of 20,000 Ndebele during the early 1980s and the "disappearance" and death of revolutionary colleagues -- and he had still been embraced by the international community as an upright leader. Rather, Chibebe speculated that if Mugabe stepped aside, Mnangagwa would proclaim a new era of reform, preach national unity, reach out to international institutions, allow former ZANU-PF leaders to retire in comfort, and receive the relieved support of the international community -- while proceeding to annihilate the opposition at the same time. As a result, Chibebe believed, existing political opposition and any semblance of future political freedom in Zimbabwe would be permanently destroyed.

COMMENT

16. Chibebe is departing his country at a tumultuous time with no notion of what he will find upon his return. As a man publicly identified as a threat to ZANU-PF's hold on power, he is suspicious not only of ZANU-PF's motives but also its methods. He is leaving a country where Raymond Majongwe, the secretary-general of an accredited union, was arrested and tortured with impunity -- twice within two weeks -- by the GOZ. In addition to gaining insight about American society and labor groups, Chibebe can provide valuable insights as to his perspective on what is happening here. He has a unique opportunity to present an alternative view of Mugabe's presentation of the crisis in Zimbabwe as a racially-based land dispute and refocus international attention on the effect Mugabe's policies are having on ordinary Zimbabweans.
SULLIVAN